

## Conclusion

Cruise missiles have been deployed in a variety of roles in their over 40-year history. Their emergence in the 1970s as bomber-enhancing strategic weapons led to the inclusion of air-launched cruise missiles in the 1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. Intermediate-range ground-launched cruise missiles, deployed in Europe as part of NATO's two-track decision, are to be eliminated under the disarmament provisions of the INF Treaty signed on 8 December 1987 by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R.

Sea-launched cruise missiles are, as yet, not subject to treaty limitation. The verification of SLCM limitations is generally seen to be particularly difficult. In the case of air-launched cruise missiles, bombers, which are relatively easy to count and which cannot carry extremely large numbers of missiles, can serve as a unit of account for the purpose of verification. In the case of ground-launched cruise missiles, a complete ban on them and their large support infrastructure has also been agreed to be verifiable.

Ships, however, have a far larger carrying capacity than aircraft, and the number of cruise missile-equipped ships can be relatively large. Submarines, the other SLCM launch platform, are designed

to be undetectable when operating. The approach taken for the limitation of air-launched cruise missiles in SALT II is therefore much more difficult to apply in the case of sea-launched cruise missiles. An outright ban on nuclear SLCMs, though easier to monitor than a limit on numbers deployed, would also be difficult to verify. The continuing presence of similar shipborne missiles such as long-range conventionally armed SLCMs and shorter-range anti-ship SLCMs would introduce the problem of trying to determine whether any of them are fitted or could easily be fitted with nuclear warheads.

The SALT II and INF Treaties, however, do demonstrate that increasingly comprehensive and co-operative verification measures can be negotiated to facilitate meaningful arms control agreements. A few years prior to the signing of the INF Treaty, it would have been difficult to predict the far-reaching verification provisions that were eventually agreed upon. If a treaty to limit or to eliminate nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missiles were eventually to be finalized, then the associated verification measures could well represent another step forward in the arms control process.